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For Immediate Release
September 7, 2005

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Senate votes to restrict violent, sexually explicit video games

LANSING – Parents would receive more ability to keep their children from being exposed to extremely violent and sexually explicit video games under legislation approved by the Senate and sent to the governor Wednesday, announced, Sen. Patty Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township.

“Young children are being exposed to too much violence these days and parents are having a hard time controlling this due to lax responsibility amongst retailers,” Birkholz said. “This legislation will help keep violent video games from children to keep them young and innocent.”

The legislation would make it a crime to sell ultra-violent or sexually explicit games to children. It follows closely on other Senate Republican efforts to protect Michigan families.

This year, undercover investigations conducted by county sheriffs found that children as young as nine years old were able to purchase video games rated for adults only at many of the stores investigated.

Violent video games have been linked to violent or criminal behavior in young people. Many studies have shown that violent or aggressive behavior can be caused by playing games that graphically depict violence. In one case in Ingham County last year, two boys caused a crash that killed a father and his young son. The boys had been driving recklessly and were trying to imitate the violent game Grand Theft Auto, in which players kill pedestrians and other drivers.

Last week, the Senate approved other legislation that would protect young people and give peace of mind to parents. The Senate passed bills that would keep sex offenders from working in schools or volunteering for organizations that work with children.

The bills are Senate Bills 416 and 463.

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